Nuggets Of News

July, 2000

News, Photographs and Events of the Gold Hill Historical Society, Est. 1986
Meetings are held the third Wednesday each month at 6:30 PM at the Museum, 504 First Avenue, Gold Hill, Oregon
(except August when the annual potluck is held at noon on the Museum grounds on the Sunday following the third Wednesday)
Mailing address: Post Office Box 26, Gold Hill, Oregon 97525-0026 Telephone: (541) 855-1182 Fax: (541) 855-9989
Museum Hours: Memorial Day through Labor Day (Summer) -- Noon to 4:00 PM, Wednesday through Sunday, except holidays
Labor Day through Memorial Day (Winter) -- Noon to 4:00 PM, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, except holidays
Admission FREE, donations accepted

Changes

It seems the only constant in our lives any more is change. Since our last newsletter in March, 2000 we have seen many changes and have had to adjust and change ourselves to accommodate them.

One of the first changes you will note as you read this newsletter is in our masthead. As a matter of economics, we have reduced our hours of operation, thereby reducing personnel and utilities costs. Even these reduced hours will have our museum open well over the five hundred hours per year required to qualify for county funding. The wages for our only paid part-time employee, the Curator, Joyce Wayland, have been a significant part of our budget and their reduction was the only way we could see to continue operations with the reduced funding from the county this year. Much numbers crunching led us to cut the Curator's hours by half. Just this week, Joyce tendered her resignation, effective July 15, 2000. At that time, we will again become an all-volunteer organization. We're going to need help from everyone, but intend to have our museum open to visitors and for research five days a week during the summer and three days a week during the winter, albeit with reduced hours. We are sorry that Joyce is leaving us, but understand. We do appreciate her years of hard work, helping us accomplish much during those years.

Budget Woes

As mentioned in the previous article, Jackson County has opted to reduce funding for fiscal year July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2001 to historical societies 14.5%. While this large a shortfall demands many adjustments, it is better than the 27% originally discussed. The letter writing campaign as well as the large turnout for the hearing at the courthouse on May 14, 2000 was all a great help in changing the County Commissioners position.

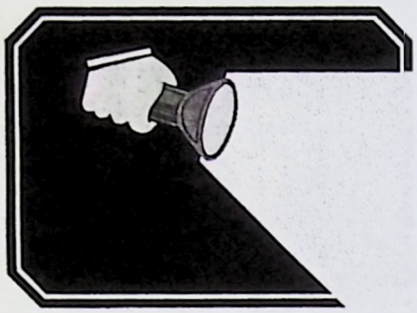
Many thanks to all of you who wrote and who "hung in there" that long day at the courthouse where, after being scheduled for 10:30 AM, were finally heard very late in the day. It was difficult to watch the Commissioners eat lunch at their desks, while everyone else was afraid to leave for fear their agenda item would come up.

Loss of a True Friend

We were devastated to learn that Southern Oregon Historical Society found it necessary to eliminate the position of Field Services Coordinator as a result of the county budget cuts. Marjorie Edens, who filled that position so beautifully, has been a true mentor and friend to the fourteen Jackson County History Museums Association members who operate under the SOHS umbrella. We will truly miss her and find it very difficult to foresee "business as usual" without her.

Slide Show

On March 14, 2000 Gloria Wood presented the slide show she developed, "Gold Hill and Surrounding Area" at the Grange Hall. This program was originally developed for the summer program at Valley of the Rogue State Park. Her presentation at the Grange had a large attendance and was well received. Many thanks to the ladies of the Grange who graciously provided refreshments after the show.



Gloria and Marge Martin also took the slide show to Morrow Heights; a new home for seniors in Rogue River and it was very well received.

Upgrades

Our "Jack of all Trades", Rex Parker, has begun the task of putting casters on all of the display cases. It should make it much easier to get them moved to change displays and also allows them to be placed tight against the wall to allow more room for visitors to move around.

The TV and VCR have been installed in a wall mount in the main display room. It's great to have it all set up and ready to show tapes to visitors and even more wonderful to have the increased room in the office.

Artifacts Breathe a Sigh of Relief

During the past quarter we requested bids on air conditioning for the storage areas upstairs. This had previously been submitted for budget and approved and the Board felt we should take this step to help preserve these often-fragile items. The heat in the upstairs storage areas has been extreme and even the insulation previously installed could not keep temperatures in the ideal range, or even close to it. All bids to add to our present central system or to install a separate dedicated upstairs ducted system were cost prohibitive. We then investigated a window air conditioner, which could be installed in the ceiling height vent window above the kitchen/dinette roof. Located where it is, it hardly shows on the outside. We purchased a 12,500 BTU unit with thermostat programmable cooling, and it has brought welcome relief.

Yard Update

Work continues on the stamp mill with projected completion before our annual potluck in August. It has been a long, hard struggle to rebuild this giant piece of our history. Many thanks to Ted Wharton who has guided the job and to all who have helped.

Another job nearing completion is raising the railroad signal. It was cut down to a size more compatible with its surroundings, and then was raised in place onto the concrete foundation. Only minor work needs to be done to complete this display.

Nugget Contest

During late winter and early spring, one of the attractions to develop young peoples'interest in our museum and local history was a contest to guess how many "gold nuggets" were in a chest. In April, entries were checked and we had two winners, and therefore duplicated the prize. Our local winner was Emma Thumler and the other was a young man, Ashley, from Eagle Point. Both were quite happy to receive their gold pan prizes.

Hanby Helpers

We've had great support and much appreciated help from the girls in the Hanby Student Activities Group. They were in again on April 12, 2000 and really pulled lots of weeds for us.

We can never adequately express how much we appreciate their energy and enthusiasm.

Gold Dust Day, 2000

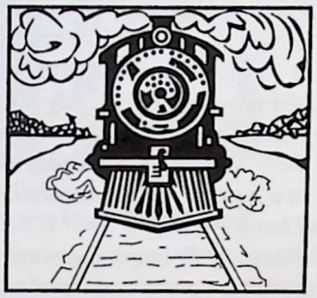
In early May we started working on our floats for the parade – yes, plural is right. We entered two floats this year. One float was Ted Wharton driving his beautifully restored 1960 Jeep pick-up towing the John Deere stamp mill engine. Armella Wharton, Marge Martin and Lyn Parker, dressed in their pioneer costumes, rode in the pick-up bed. The other was a six-wheeler towing a low trailer decorated as a stream, with actual running water. Beside the stream a gold miner, Joyce Wayland, was panning for gold. She was accompanied by several young people from town. Our entries won second place so it was worth the effort.

(Continued on page 3)

Because of the extreme heat, we chose to forego having a booth in the park. Instead we put up signs inviting everyone to visit us in our "cool, shady yard". We did have a few visitors and made a few sales, so may decide to do the same in future years.

Railroads

Gloria Wood is working on some programs about railroading in our history and I recently received the following in my Internet mail and thought you 'd get a chuckle from it too.



Interesting...How Technology Advances!

Just about the time you think you know it all, someone comes up with something you don't really care about. Here is an interesting twist on management and engineering. Here is a look into the corporate mind that is very interesting, educational, historical, completely true and hysterical all at the same time.

The U. S. standard railroad gauge (width between the two rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used?

Because that's the way they built them in England, and the US railroads were built by English expatriates.

Why did the English build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used.

Why did "they" use that gauge then? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used for building wagons which used that wheel spacing.

Okay! Why did the wagons have that particular odd wheel spacing? Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break on some of the old, long distance roads in England, because that's the spacing of the wheel ruts.

So who built those old rutted roads? The first long distance roads in Europe (and England) were built by Imperial Rome for their legions. The roads have been used ever since. And the ruts in the roads? Roman war chariots first formed the initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagon wheels. Since the chariots were made for (or by) Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing. The United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet 8.5 inches derives from the original specification for an Imperial Roman war chariot.

Specifications and bureaucracies live forever. So the next time you are handed a specification and wonder what horse's ass came up with it, you may be exactly right, because the Imperial Roman war chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the back ends of two war horses. Thus, we have the answer to the original question.

Now the twist to the story....

There's an interesting extension to the story about railroad gauges. And horses behinds. When we see a space shuttle sitting on its launch pad, there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are solid rocket boosters, or SRBs. The SRBs are made by Thiokol at their factory in Utah. The engineers who designed the SRBs might have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line from the factory had to run through a tunnel in the mountains. The SRBs had to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than the railroad track, and the railroad track is about as wide as two horses' behinds. So, the major design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of a Horse's Ass!

More Happenings

We continue being able to help a few people with their research on families and past occurrences in our area. We felt especially gratified when we were able to assist Ron Brown of KDRV-TV with some research and photos for his series on Oregon history. It makes it all worth while!

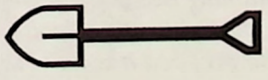
We loaned some artifacts to Les Schwab for their "Gold Rush" advertising campaign. They had the items on display in their new store on Highway 62 for about six weeks. It made us feel good that they asked us for assistance and gave our museum credit. The more people who are aware of what we are and what we do, the better, and what better way to get the word out there.

On May 10, 2000 we were happy to host a tour of 23 people from Rogue Valley Manor. We often host smaller groups, but this was the largest tour group of adults we have had. Everyone seemed to enjoy his or her visit, and so did we.

Programs

"Go For the Gold"

On May 24, 2000 we presented a program for twenty-two 4th graders, their teacher, Mrs. Lakefish, and five parents. Gloria Wood, Joyce Wayland, Clare Moore, Marge Martin and Lyn Parker split the class into four groups and each group took turns learning the different aspects of gold mining. Joyce demonstrated gold panning and let the children try their hand at it. Marge helped them make a "poke (ore) bag". Gloria and her group discussed the tools of the trade – what tools they'd bring and why. They were also presented with a picture of numerous tools and were asked to circle the things they'd need. Clare and Lyn showed a video on the gold rush and gave the children and interactive questionnaire to fill out as the video was running.



"Home Sweet Home"

On May 26, 2000 we hosted the same class, teacher and parents for the second half of the program and a truly enjoyable and educational day was had by all. All, who were able, teacher, students and volunteers, dressed in period costumes and the class learned a lot about what life and home were like in the early days settling the West. Once again the class was split into four groups, then rotated through the steps. Clare taught the children to scrub clothes on the scrub board and use the old hand wringer. Joyce taught them methods to preserve foods. Gloria showed pictures of early schools here, and discussed Margaret Patrick (Patrick Elementary School is named for her) and her family, and gave them copies of an Oregon map on which they colored in the rivers and mountains. Lyn showed how quilts were designed to use every scrap of fabric as well as bring color and beauty to their lives, and then had her groups design and color their own quilt pattern. By far, the favorite task on this day was churning butter, which Marge taught, and then everyone was treated to a typical "trail lunch". The parents heated stew over a wood fire in the barbecue in the yard, and the teacher, Mrs. Lakefish, brought two large pans of cornbread. The cornbread was topped with some of the freshly churned butter, and all that wished had a taste of the fresh buttermilk. All of the food was delicious, and helped make a wonderful learning experience for this 4th grade. They really had a good "taste" of what life was like in the "good old days". Many thanks to Gloria Wood and Mrs. Lakefish for developing this program and for all of their hard work setting up the logistics.

So True Are These Words and Beautiful to Read

(From the Internet0

Tribute to the United States

This, from a Canadian newspaper, is worth sharing America: The Good Neighbor

Widespread but only partial news coverage was given recently to a remarkable editorial broadcast from Toronto by Gordon Sinclair, a Canadian television commentator. What follows is the full text of his trenchant remarks as printed in the Congressional Record.

"This Canadian thinks it is time to speak up for the Americans as the most generous and possibly the least appreciated people on all the earth.

Germany, Japan and to a lesser extent, Britain and Italy were lifted out of the debris of war by the Americans who poured in billions of dollars and forgave other billions in debts. None of these countries is today paying even the interest on its remaining debts to the United States.

When France was in danger of collapsing in 1956, it was the Americans who propped it up, and their reward was to be insulted and swindled on the streets of Paris. I was there. I saw it.

When earthquakes hit distant cities, it is the United States that hurries in to help. This spring, 59 American communities were flattened by tornadoes. Nobody helped.

The Marshall Plan and the Truman Policy pumped billions of dollars into discouraged countries. Now newspapers in those countries are writing about the decadent, warmongering Americans.

I'd like to see just one of those countries that is gloating over the erosion of the United States dollar build its own airplane. Does any other country in the world have a plane to equal the Boeing Jumbo Jet, the Lockheed Tri-Star, or the Douglas DC-10? If so, why don't they fly them? Why do all the international lines except Russia fly American planes?

Why does no other land on earth even consider putting a man or woman on the moon? You talk about Japanese technocracy, and you get radios. You talk about German technocracy, and you get automobiles. You talk about American technocracy, and you find men on the moon – not once, but several times – and safely home again.

You talk about scandals, and the Americans put theirs right in the store window for everybody to look at. Even their draft-dodgers are not pursued and hounded. They are here on our streets, and most of them, unless they are breaking Canadian laws, are getting American dollars from ma and pa at home to spend here.

When the railways of France, Germany and India were breaking down through age, it was the Americans who rebuilt them. When the Pennsylvania Railroad and the New York Central went broke, nobody loaned them an old caboose. Both are still broke.

I can name you 5000 times when the Americans raced to the help of other people in trouble. Can you name me even one time when someone else raced to the Americans in trouble? I don't think there was outside help even during the San Francisco earthquake.

Our neighbors have faced it alone, and I'm one Canadian who is dammed tired of hearing them get kicked around. They will come out of this thing with their flag high. And when they do, they are entitled to thumb their nose at the lands that are gloating over their present troubles. I hope Canada is not one of those."

Stand proud, America!

Raffle

Be sure to get your tickets for the beautiful hand made afghan, which will be raffled off at the annual potluck in August. The afghan is on display in the gift shop at the museum, so come in and take a look, then take as many chances as possible. Tickets sell for $1.00 each or 6 for $5.00

Annual Potluck

Be sure to join us for our annual potluck on August 20, 2000, noon till?? We always have such a great time and so many wonderful foods to sample. Just bring a dish of your choice and your table service and we'll furnish the beverages. Plus we have our beautiful shady yard to relax in. In addition to the raffle for the beautiful hand made afghan; we'll also play our "white elephant" Bingo. Bring one wrapped white elephant gift for each card you wish to play. When gifts are won and chosen the first time, they are unwrapped and tagged. As the game continues, winners may choose a wrapped gift (as long as they last) or any unwrapped gift with one or two tags. When a gift is chosen and thereby gets a third tag, it is out of circulation and remains with the third winner. Some real strategies come into play here.

President's Message

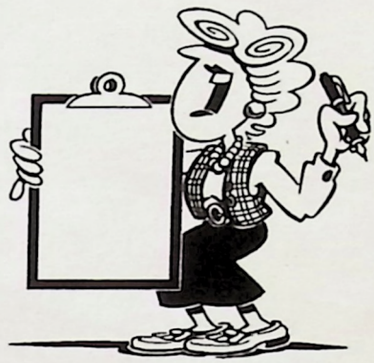
Greetings to all members and friends.....

Summer is here at last and our busiest time of year is upon us. Budget shortfalls have caused some changes in our days and hours of operation and loss of paid hours at the museum, so we'll have to rely more heavily on our volunteers. I'm sure we'll come through this time with our usual "can do" attitude. After all, that's what got us this far. When we stop and realize how much has been accomplished since the historical society was founded in 1986, we also realize we can do this too.

Many thank to all of you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Lyn

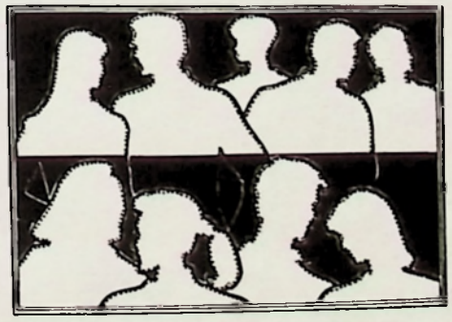


Rockpoint Pioneer Cemetery

Clean up days at the cemetery On May 20 and 27, 2000 were quite successful, as reported by Marge Martin, President of the Cemetery Association. The volunteers really worked hard both days and everything looks better than it has in many years. Marge and her helpers have kept busy removing dead trees, adding rock to roads and keeping weeds at bay. She has also planted many drought resistant flowers, so everything is looking good.

Membership

So far, we're holding the line and keeping our dues at the $6.00 per year for a family membership. With budget shortfall this year and warnings that future years will probably see even more cuts, we all need to consider ways we can maintain a large enough cash flow to stay afloat. All suggestions will be considered and appreciated. This is your historical society and we need your ideas.



Board of Directors

Lyn Parker, President

Marge Martin, Vice President

Gloria Wood, Secretary

Clare Moore, Treasurer

Ted Wharton

Rex Parker

Our Purpose and Goals

The Gold Hill Historical Society's Purpose and Goals are to collect, document and preserve the History of the Gold Hill area through:

Oral Histories
Photographs
Artifacts
Books

Gold Hill Historical Society
504 First Avenue
Post Office Box 26
Gold Hill, Oregon 97525-0026

- ☐ Not Deliverable As Addressed
  Unable To Forward
- ☐ No Such Number
- ☐ Vacant
- ☐ Insufficient Address
- ☐ Attempted - Not Known
- ☐ No Mail Receptacle
- ☐ Refused

Route# _____

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Eagle Point Historical Soc. & Museum
301 N. Royal Ave.
Eagle Point, Oregon 97524